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## Notes and Opinions.

**The Conclusions of Mark's and John's Gospels.**—In a recent pamphlet Dr. Paul Rohrbach, of Berlin, discusses the origin of Mark 16:9-20 and John 21. His theory is that John 21, in an earlier form which had fewer Johannine elements, was the original ending of Mark's Gospel, but that it was dropped off at an early date because of certain disagreements with the Johannine tradition as to certain resurrection appearances of Christ. The present ending was made up for Mark's Gospel in the second century from reports of Mark's pupils and of the presbyter Aristion. All four of the Gospels were given their present form by a school of presbyters in Asia Minor in the first half of the second century.

**The Bible of Josephus.**—Under this title, but in German, has appeared a careful study by Adam Mez of the quotations from the Old Testament books Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, used by Josephus in his *Antiquities*, bks. v-vii. His purpose was to discover whether Josephus used a Hebrew or a Greek version of these books, and if a Greek version, which one of the several possible ones. The *Independent* gives the following summary of his conclusions: "In the book of Joshua he cites according to the Hebrew text, while in the books of Samuel he departs from the Hebrew but does not adopt the reading of the Alexandrine or the Vatican, but rather the so-called Lucian text, even where this blunders, sometimes even misunderstanding these readings. In regard to Judges, the matter is not so clear; but here, too, the probabilities are that he follows the Lucian text. Mez agrees with the conclusions reached by others, namely, that the *Vetus Latinus* often agrees with the Lucian readings, and in many cases with the Peshitto. Then, too, the author is convinced that the basis or original source of the Lucian text is considerably older than Lucian. And this original Lucian text he also regards as having been used by Theodotion, which relation explains the fact that so many readings which as such are known to be Theodotion's are earlier found in the New Testament. Professor Schürer, in discussing these results, admits that some of the data in question may admit of a different interpretation, but evidently regards the whole as substantially correct."

**The Bearing of Inaccuracies upon the Value of the Bible.**—After discussing the Septuagint Version in its relation to the text and interpretation of the Old Testament, Professor Kirkpatrick, of Cambridge, in the *Expositor* for April, asks: "What inference is to be drawn from the facts (1) that on the one hand even the Hebrew text of the Old Testament has not been preserved intact and free from error, and (2) that on the other hand the Old Testament

was only known to and used by the Christian Church for centuries in a form so strikingly divergent from the *Hebraica veritas?* . . . . That the provision of an infallible text of the Bible and the provision of an authoritative and inerrant interpretation of it were not part of God's purpose. These matters, which lay within the province of man, were left to men. Scribes and translators are liable to err, and they erred. They made mistakes, as they did in the case of secular books. No divine providence preserved them from error, either in transcribing or in translating. Yet, in spite of all the errors of the LXX, in spite of the marvelous methods of interpretation founded upon those errors, the Book, the Library of Books, fulfilled its purpose. The LXX was truly . . . . a divinely provided translation of the Old Testament. Here was a voice of God speaking to men as a living oracle, as no other books spoke or could speak; witnessing to the action of the living God in the affairs of men, testifying to his righteousness, his truth, his holiness. The Spirit spoke, though he spoke through the lips of men, as it were in stammering accents and often unintelligible words. On the whole the *regula fidei*, the tradition of Christian doctrine, kept men's minds in the right direction amid all the strange intricacies and vagaries of allegorical interpretation; and much true and noble and elevating spiritual thought is to be found even where it fails as argument because it lacks solid foundation.

"Need we be startled if the 'higher criticism' discloses to us that something analogous was the case in regard to the original composition of the Scriptures? if we are compelled to recognize that the human elements of personality, time, locality, are larger than we once supposed? Holy men of old spake indeed as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; but they spake not only in the language, but according to the modes of thought of their times. Need we be dismayed if modern investigation tells us that they composed their histories according to the methods of Oriental historiography, compiling, combining, altering, modifying, the works of their predecessors? Need we be shocked if we find reason to believe that they employed allegory as the vehicle of teaching because it was the regular mode of instruction, the only mode available for a people to whom abstract thought was unnatural, the only mode capable of lasting for all time, and speaking with force to young and old, learned and unlearned alike? Need we be alarmed if we find that works were written in the name of illustrious persons of a bygone age with the intention of expressing their thoughts, real or supposed? Need we be troubled if it be proved that the scribes amplified and edited the work of previous generations with a freedom which amazes us? God speaks through, nay, even in spite of, the imperfections of his human instruments, and his word 'effectually worketh in those who believe.'"